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ABSTRACT

Staff from Generations Together evaluated the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps' intergenerational projects to give the Corps a better understanding of the views of project participants, to identify problems, and to offer recommendations for improvements. These Conservation Corps programs teamed older workers as group leaders or Corps members with younger workers, many of whom were at-risk urban youth. Data were gathered from site visits at three sites that used a variety of approaches and combinations of older and younger workers. Questionnaires were completed by 4 administrators, 5 crew leaders, and 27 crew members. Almost all of the participants rated the training workshops as very successful, citing learning about working together and group dynamics as the major benefits of participation. Administrators acknowledged problems related to finance and budgeting, but all felt that their intergenerational crew leaders were doing an outstanding job. Younger and older crew members appeared to relate well to one another on the crews, and members of both groups agreed that the program fostered positive attitudes between the generations. Most crew members indicated that their views of older persons had always been positive, so that the work experience did not change their attitudes very much. Problems were noted in some areas generally related to setting goals and providing training. Generations Together staff recommended promoting an enhanced awareness of intergenerational issues and defining goals more completely. Four appendixes contain a questionnaire about the workshops and one for each group surveyed. (SLD)

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ED 414 301

GENERATIONS TOGETHER: AN INTERGENERATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAM UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

EVALUATION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA CONSERVATION CORPS INTERGENERATIONAL PROJECTS

Report to the Pennsylvania Conservation Corp
April, 1995

Christopher Ward, Ph.D.

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Generations Together
Evaluation of the
Pennsylvania Conservation Corps
Intergenerational Projects
March, 1995

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Generations Together evaluated the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps' intergenerational projects to give the Corps a better understanding of project participants' views, to bring attention to problems and highlights, and to offer recommendations for improvements.

METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS

Data was gathered during site visits; from observation, debriefing, and questionnaires at the crew leader training; and from questionnaires given to project administrators, crew leaders, and crew members.

SITE VISITS

The sites demonstrated the wide variety of approaches, goals, and structures used by the intergenerational projects:

- Ebensburg included younger and older corp members, offered a high level of assessment and training, and emphasized job placement.
- Pittsburgh used older adults throughout the project, emphasized enrolling youth for a year or more, and gave youth a voice in the project.
- Elderton had an older adult crew leader and administrator, focused on the borough's sports complex, recruited corps members through the Job Service, and was less formal than other sites.

OUTCOMES

Workshops

The participants said that the workshops were good to excellent and made good use of their time. They helped to build relationships and gave participants a better understanding of group dynamics. Participants learned about listening, empathy, and sensitivity to others. Future workshops should be more of the same: small, informal working groups.

Administrators

Administrators reported:

- Their primary responsibilities were for fiscal and personnel management.
- Their most common problems related to financial reporting and reimbursement.
- Their crew leaders did an outstanding job, their crews gave outstanding performances, and the intergenerational projects were highly successful.
- The younger and older persons related very well on the crews.
- The Conservation Corps was accessible, supportive, and responded in a timely fashion.
- The projects did not have the same goals.
- The projects could be improved through agency coordination for crew member employment, more projects to prevent down time, clearer fiscal recommendations and more efficient procedures, and more personalized career counseling.

Crew Leaders

Crew leaders reported:

- Job responsibilities that ranged from teaching, to job placement, to discipline.
- Their major problems were lack of time (to do work, to work with youth) and crew member behavior.
- Their most important program goal was to "teach values and attitudes."
- Varying levels of satisfaction with their jobs. Most rewarding to them were the work done by the crews, crew members' growth, and the sharing of ideas with the crew.
- Their attitudes about youth changed very little during the project.
- Their communication with the crews ranged from adequate to excellent.

- The intergenerational projects were successful or highly successful.
- Hands-on or on-the-job training contributed most to crew member learning.
- The major project successes were completion of specific projects and finding employment for crew members.
- Administrators provided them with an outstanding level of support.
- The projects could be improved by extending the length of the training period.

Crew Members

Crew members reported:

- Their responsibilities were related to work, to following rules, and to "getting things done." They regarded learning as a less important responsibility.
- They enrolled to obtain training and to earn money.
- They rated the Conservation Corps training more highly than they rated other schooling.
- Their view of older persons did not change while they worked on the project.
- They rated the communication between the crew leaders and the crews very highly.
- The intergenerational projects were very successful.
- Learning and accomplishing things that added to their pride and self confidence were the most rewarding aspects of the corps.
- Crew members learned by doing.
- More than half reported no major problems. Those who did cited people and communications problems (primarily with other crew members) most frequently followed by lack of pay or late pay raises and "Not knowing how to do something."
- Nearly all of the recommendations focused on work related issues: pay, tools, job placement, and crew size. To increase the pay scale and to offer overtime were the most frequent recommendation.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- The favorable ratings the participants gave the projects and the other participants.
- The positive intergenerational relationships.
- The high regard the crew members had for the Conservation Corp training.
- The local sites' extensive experience, expertise, and energy.

PROBLEMS

- Reimbursement and fiscal policies.
- Lack of a unified set of goals for the projects as a whole.
- Wide variance in the amount and quality of GED and other career-related training.
- Lack of consistent information for potential corps members across the projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase the intergenerational training to give the participants a higher level of intergenerational awareness.
- Develop and share techniques and materials across sites that assist in teaching "classroom" material to corps members who are geared to hands-on learning styles.
- Monitor the training so that all corps members receive a minimum level of GED, technical, and jobs skills preparation.
- Develop a consistent vision for all the intergenerational projects. In particular, crew members should understand clearly that the corps is more than a temporary job and that it is preparing them for the future.

Generations Together

Evaluation of the

Pennsylvania Conservation Corps

Intergenerational Projects

April, 1995

I. INTRODUCTION

Generations Together evaluated the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps' intergenerational projects in September and October of 1994 using the following strategies:

A. Questionnaires and debriefing at the September intergenerational leadership training workshop.

B. Interviews and program observations conducted during visits to selected sites.

C. Questionnaires administered in conjunction with the site visits (or via mail when no site visit was scheduled) to administrators, crew leaders, and crew members.

The purpose of the evaluation was to give those responsible for the Conservation Corps a better understanding of how the intergenerational projects' participants (administrators, crew leaders, crew members) viewed the projects and their participation in the Corps; to bring to the Corps' attention both problems and highlights; and to offer recommendations about program improvements.

II. METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS

A. Site Visits

The Generations Together trainer made scheduled site visits to all the operating intergenerational project sites in October, 1994. The evaluator accompanied him to three sites (Ebensburg, Elderton, Pittsburgh) to interview administrators, crew leaders, and participants, and to view the sites' facilities and operations.

B. Crew Leader Training Workshop Questionnaire

Generations Together designed a short questionnaire [Attachment A] to provide the training team with information on how participants rated the crew leader training workshop held September 20 - 21 at Wilson College in Chambersburg. The questionnaire asked participants to rate the training, to give specific activities they found most useful and felt made best use of their time, to tell what provided the most learning, to assess specific activities, and to make suggestions for future workshops. The questionnaire was drafted, reviewed by the training team, administered, and tallied. The information was given to the trainers for their review and is summarized in this report.

C. Crew Leader Training Workshop Debriefing

The evaluator attended the second day of the training workshop and participated in all activities. At the end of the workshop, he debriefed the participants about the training. Participation in the workshop familiarized the evaluator with the sites, their staff, and the intergenerational projects in general prior to the site visits and provided insights helpful in the construction of the participant questionnaires.

D. Participant Questionnaires

The primary sources of data for the evaluation were the three questionnaires developed for administrators, crew leaders, and crew members.

The evaluator drafted the questionnaires, which were then reviewed by three other Generations Together staff and revised. The instruments included open-ended, scaled, and multiple choice questions. A cover sheet explained the purpose of the evaluation.

Administrator questionnaires asked about responsibilities, program goals, problems and their solution, crew and crew leader performance, relationships between older and youngers, quality of support, program goals, and recommendations [Attachment B].

Crew leader questionnaires asked about job responsibilities and satisfaction, changes in attitudes toward youth, communications, overall rating of the program, crew members' learning, problems and successes, quality of support, and recommendations [Attachment C].

Crew member questionnaires asked about responsibilities, overall rating of the program, satisfaction with the program, communication, changes in attitudes to older adults, activities, problems, and recommendations [Attachment D].

Four administrators, five crew leaders, and 27 crew members completed questionnaires. Their responses are summarized in Section IV, below. The response categories correspond, for the most part, to items on the questionnaires; in a few cases the responses to several items were summarized under one category. Quotations from the questionnaires have been included to give an in-depth feel for the participants' opinions.

III. SITE VISITS

For a better understanding of the projects, the Generations Together evaluator made site visits to three Conservation Corps intergenerational project sites in late October, 1994. The three sites visits demonstrated the wide variety of approaches, goals, and structures that the intergenerational projects used.

A. Ebensburg (Appalachian Youth Service Intergenerational Corps)

The Ebensburg site was characterized by:

- The intergenerational model differed from the other sites in that the crew members included both younger persons and older persons. The crew leader was not an older adult.

- The project used a high level of assessment and training. This approach and their thoughtfulness about expectations, communication, and problem solving reflected the agency's experience as a Job Training Partnership Act training contractor.

- The crew members were learning primarily carpentry and related skills.

- The project emphasized finding people jobs.

B. Pittsburgh (Youth Build in Homewood-Brushton)

The following characterized the Pittsburgh site:

- The Pittsburgh site took a holistic approach to the intergenerational project. Two Senior Aides worked with the crew and another Senior Aide worked in the office making the crew members their lunches. Some of the projects were at senior high rises and ribbon-cutting ceremonies included older adults.

- The project emphasized enrolling youth for at least one year.

- A good deal of attention was given to developing respect for youth and giving youth a say in the project.

- The Community College of Allegheny County conducted the project's GED training.

- Through work on the rehabing of a house, crew members learned a wide variety of skills. For example, toward the end of the project they learned about such finishing details as laying carpet and choosing landscape shrubbery.

C. Elderton (Elderton Intergenerational Conservation Corps)

The Elderton site was characterized by:

- The Elderton project was intergenerational in that both the crew leader and the project (volunteer) administrator were older adults.

- The Elderton project focused on meeting a specific, ongoing community need. The crew members worked on the borough's sports complex.

- The project was quite informal with some organized training and some training supplied by volunteers.

- Crew members came to the Elderton project via the Pennsylvania Job Service; more than at other sites they viewed participation as holding a job, rather than as enrolling in a training program.

IV. OUTCOMES

A. Outcomes - Workshop Questionnaires

Although the attendance at the workshop was small with not all sites sending staff, those persons who participated rated it highly.

1. Participants' Overall Rating of the Workshop

All the participants rated the workshop good to excellent.

2. What Participants Liked Most and Least About the Workshop

Most participants liked how the workshop helped to build relationships and interaction with others. They also liked the informality and openness.

The only negative comment about the workshop offered by more than one person was "the food."

3. Usefulness of the Workshop

All the participants rated the workshop as useful. Most indicated that the most useful aspect of the workshop to them was getting a better understanding of group dynamics.

4. **How Well the Workshop Used Participants' Time**

The participants all said that the workshop made very good use of their time. However, specific activities received mixed reviews in this regard: some participants found certain activities to be an excellent use of time and some found the same activities to very of little use [This specific information was passed on to the trainers].

5. **What Participants Learned from the Workshop**

Participants most frequently mentioned learning about listening, empathy, and sensitivity to others. They also indicated they learned about group dynamics and about the importance of expressing their thoughts and feelings.

6. **Participant Suggestions**

The participants suggested that future intergenerational training workshops feature more of the same: small, informal working groups.

B. Outcomes - Participant Questionnaires

1. **Administrators' Responses to the Questionnaires**

a. Administrators' Responsibilities

Administrators' most important responsibilities for their Conservation Corps intergenerational projects were fiscal management and personnel management. Other responsibilities included general program management, building community support, and providing services to their corps members.

b. Administrators' Program Goals

The four responding programs did not have the same goals. Three programs emphasized helping crew members develop work and personal skills, while one program emphasized employment and service to the community.

However, when asked to rate how important specific goals were for their programs, all four administrators gave two goals the very highest rating: "To teach values and attitudes" and "To help people get jobs." They rated to "To complete specific projects" and "To teach specific work skills" somewhat less important.

The programs generally met their goals. On a scale of 1 ("goals met completely") to 7 ("goals not met at all") three administrators rated their programs as 2 and one rated it as 3.

Administrators cited the following as evidence that program goals were met:

- Relationships formed among the crew members and leaders.
- Mentoring relationships formed.
- Corps members' appreciated what they learned and valued the work they accomplished.
- Community organizations benefitted from a crew's work.
- Crew members learned to work cooperatively.
- Crew member completed aptitude and attitude assessments to help them plan their futures.
- Crew members got jobs.

One administrator said the following about meeting program goals:

> *"A camaraderie developed that included and was encouraged by the crew leader. Once this rapport was established mentoring relationships developed out of mutual respect. Corps members began to appreciate not only what they were learning but also the value of work they were accomplishing. These attitudes translated well when a corps member made the transition into a private sector job."*

c. Major Problems and Their Solutions

Administrators most frequently mentioned problems related to financial reporting and reimbursement. Specific problems and the solutions they suggested included:

- The slow turn around on requests for monthly reimbursement.

  - Telephoned the Harrisburg office to correct anything that had caused a delay in reimbursement.

- Balancing the educational component with worksite productivity.

  - Eliminated the educational coordinator position and had the crew leader assume responsibility for educational training as well as for worksite supervision. Arranged classroom space at the job site to allow a more flexible schedule.

- Lack of long-term association with older Americans.

  - Developed closer ties with R.S.V.P. and the Area Agency on Aging.

- Breakdown in communication between administration, crew leader, and crew.

  - Had all that program's members meet once a week to discuss the program and its projects.

d. Performance of the Intergenerational Crew Leader

The administrators said their intergenerational crew leaders were doing an outstanding job. On a scale of 1 (outstanding) to 7 (poor) all three responding administrators rated their crew leaders as 2.

Two administrators described their crew leaders very positively (one program had no prior experience with crews as a basis of comparison). One said: "He is extremely knowledgeable in all facts of construction and shares that knowledge in each project. Furthermore, he demonstrates concern for each crew member."

Another administrator wrote that his crew leader "Involves his group in all phases of project planning, motivates his group and allows for the free flow of ideas. He's committed to education."

A third administrator expressed mixed opinions about his crew leader. His crew leader was very good at establishing rapport with his crew but relied too heavily on the supervisor and had a hard time "deciding what the next step should be."

e. Performance of the Intergenerational Crew

The intergenerational crews gave an outstanding performance. On a scale of 1 (outstanding) to 7 (poor) one administrator rated his intergenerational crew as 1 and the other two administrators rated theirs as 2.

One administrator said that crew members had matured significantly and had developed positive attitudes about their work. Another indicated that all major program goals had been met and that five corps members had met their educational goals and found jobs. A third administrator said there had been little absenteeism and that the crew took on any job that was assigned to it, taking pride in its accomplishments.

One administrator said of the intergenerational crew:

> *"Most all corps members matured significantly. They took pride in being productive and were receptive to constructive criticism in regard to preparing for their future. Generally, they developed very positive attitudes about what they were doing.*

f. Relationships Between Younger and Older Persons

Younger and older persons related very well on the intergenerational crews. On a scale of 1 (very well) to 7 (not well) three administrators rated the relationships as 2 and one rated them as 4 (moderately well).

Asked to comment on the intergenerational relationships, administrators gave universally positive responses. One administrator wrote that the project gave younger people an opportunity to work with an older adult in the pursuit of a common goal, and from this developed respect. Another administrator felt the crew had become more sensitive to the "abilities of an older person." Yet another administrator said that crew members had a chance to talk about the world of work and life skills as well as learn about woodworking and construction. The senior corps members were able to model positive work habits and serve as mentors.

Administrators made these specific comments about the relationships:

> *"This was an opportunity to work along side an older person and a chance to develop a respect based on a shared interest and common goal. I believe that the corps members came to appreciate the benefits of age--namely maturity and knowledge."*

> *"The benefits of combining generational perspectives proved to be one of the strong points of the program. Youth had the opportunity to discuss the world of work and life skills issues in addition to learning woodworking and general constructions kills. Senior corps members had the opportunity to model positive work habits and serve as mentors to the youth."*

g. Overall Rating of the Intergenerational Conservation Corp Program

Overall, the administrators rated the intergenerational projects as highly successful. On a scale of 1 (highly successful) to 7 (not successful) two rated them as 1 and two rated them as 2.

Two administrators mentioned that working with older adults, the young and inexperienced corps members were able to gain knowledge and skills. Moreover, the program fostered positive attitudes between the generations.

Another administrator wrote that the job placement of corps members had been successful. Some of them had gone on to post-secondary education.

To another administrator, the program was successful because it had completed projects that benefitted the community. The crew members were able to learn skills and work habits and take pride in their accomplishments. Also, several of the crew members had permanent jobs.

One administrator summed up the program as follows:

> *"It has been highly successful in completing the various projects set for the grant as a benefit to the community area, but also been highly successful in training the crew members in various skill disciplines, work habits, and pride in accomplishment that breeds a positive image of self-worth for the individual corps member. Also, the number of corps members that hired in permanent jobs was the ultimate success of the program."*

h. Quality of Support From the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps

All four administrators felt that the Conservation Corps was easily accessible, supported requests for budget changes and clarification of program priorities, and dealt with other issues in a timely fashion.

However, the lack of clarity in fiscal regulations and contradictions between state and federal interpretations of fiscal issues was a problem.

i. Administrators' Recommendations to Improve the Program

- Coordinate corps members with federal, state, and local agencies in order to arrange more permanent career positions (ie through building trades apprenticeships).
- Have more projects ready to go to prevent crew down time and maintain crew enthusiasm.
- Offer more personalized career counseling.

- Have clearer regulations concerning fiscal issues such as allowable costs.
- Give a more rapid turn around for reimbursements.
- Offer substantial start up funding.

2. **Crew Leader Responses**

a. Crew Leader Responsibilities

The five crew leaders' responsibilities differed significantly:

- Two were responsible for teaching and motivating crew members.
- One fostered intergenerational communication and then turned that communication into action.
- One kept time and did job placement.
- One handled discipline and maintained guidelines and rules.

b. Crew Leader Program Goals

The crew leaders rated specific program goals in the following (descending) order of importance:

1. "To teach values and attitudes"
2. "To teach specific work skills"
3. "To help people get jobs"
4. "To complete specific projects."

c. Crew Leader Position Compared to Previous Positions

The crew leaders were divided on how satisfying they found their positions compared to other jobs they had held. One group found the current position much more satisfying than other jobs; another group found it about the same as other jobs. On a scale of 1 (Much more satisfying) to 7 (Much less satisfying) three crew leaders rated their satisfaction level as 1 and two rated it as 4.

The explanations that crew leaders gave for why they found their positions satisfying were low-key and to the point. Two respondents expressed pleasure in being able to teach others and to see the difference they could make in the crew members. Another felt that he was making "a small difference."

Crew leaders said the following about their positions:

> *"I've always enjoyed the work I have done. I got back from my crew that which I gave. They understood what I taught and demonstrated initiative and provided alternate solutions."*

> *"Rarely does one get to teach someone to do something and then watch him apply himself to reach greater heights with the knowledge and values that I help him realize he has."*

d. Crew Leader Attitude Change Toward Young People

Asked about how their attitudes toward young people had changed since they began working with the crew, the crew leaders gave a wide range of responses, but tended to downplay how much their attitudes had changed. On a scale of 1 (A great deal) to 7 (Not at all) one replied 2, one replied 4, 2 replied 5, and one

replied 7. Individual crew leaders described their attitudes as follows:

- One took the time to understand a young person and didn't judge by looks.
- Another believed in the future of young people, and saw similarities between his crew members and his son.
- A third never had negative attitudes towards young people, but had always looked at individuals' likes and dislikes.
- A fourth believed that young people today are more outgoing and aggressive and that these characteristics are reflected in their negative attitudes. However, these negative attitudes can be changed with discipline, patience, and communication.

e. Crew Members' Attitudes Toward Crew Leaders

The crew leaders had widely varying opinions on how much crew members' attitudes toward them changed while they worked with the crew. On a scale of 1 (Changed a great deal) to 7 (Not at all) one replied 1, two replied 3, and one replied 5.

The crew leaders focused on how crew members learned to see the other person's point of view and to respect the other person's experience and ideas. However, the leaders made no mention about age-related attitudes. Three of the crew leaders pointed out similarities the crew members came to see between themselves and the crew leaders: "They didn't see any great differences between me and them"; "They knew...in my life I have

experienced the same kinds of needs, wants, and frustrations they have experienced." Two crew leaders addressed crew members coming to see their point of view: "They look at my side now"; "They respect me and my ideas."

f. Crew Leader/Crew Communication

The crew leaders' rating of their communication with the crews ranged from adequate to excellent. On a scale of 1 (Excellent) to 7 (Poor), one crew leader rated their communication with the crew as 1, one as 2, two as 3, and one as 4. The leaders' comments reflect the range of opinion:

- "Crew members recognized me as the leader, but knew that I would listen to them and adjust: "We were a team."
- "There was respect for everyone involved."
- "Personal matters weren't discussed."
- "I knew my crew members' moods, thoughts, and personal experiences."

Crew leaders said:

> *"They knew that I was the leader, but was willing to listen and adjust; just as I expected of them. We were a team."*

> *"General (must know) information was always exchanged. Things of a more personal matter were usually not discussed. I knew their hobbies, likes and dislikes. I knew nothing of their home lives, personal feelings, or problems."*

g. Overall Rating of the Intergenerational Conservation Corps Program

The intergenerational projects were rated successful to highly successful. On a scale of 1 (highly successful) to 7 (Not successful), one crew leader rated the program as 1, two as 2, one as 3, and one as 4.

Asked to explain their ratings, two respondents said that many of their crew had gotten jobs; one cited the bonding and the development of common interests among the diverse crew members who came into the program.

h. Most Rewarding/Least Rewarding Aspects of the Work

The crew leaders said the most rewarding aspects of the work were the following:

- The quality and amount of work done by the crew.
- The growth of crew members.
- The sharing of ideas with the young crew members to reach a goal.

One crew leader comments:

"[The most rewarding aspect of the work is] observing how people who come with macho, negative attitudes make the transition to more mellow, positive individuals who discover with pride what it means to participate in and accomplish constructive projects; while at the same time realizing that it has also been a learning process."

Crew leaders found the following the "least rewarding:"

- Behavioral problems
- Not being able to reach a young person
- The lack of time to improve corps members lives.

i. Activities that Contributed Most to Crew Members' Learning

Crew leaders offered a variety of suggestions as to which activities contributed most to crew member learning. Four of five leaders rate hands-on or on-the-job categories as contributing most to learning. They suggested the following as contributing most to learning (in descending order of usefulness).

- The "hands-on" or "on-the-job" approach
- The team approach to work
- The class time and educational program
- A "show and tell" approach
- An individualized approach to instruction.

j. Major Problems and Their Solutions

Time was a problem for two leaders: lack of time to work with individual crew members, a late project startup date, and

lack of time to do office work, planning, and material acquisition.

Crew members' behavior was a problem for two leaders including "the use of boom boxes and disgusting language" and "the lack of knowledge and lack of understanding of basic human rights."

The crew leaders' solutions to these problems included:

- Patience, understanding, and teaching
- Finding new ways to get members
- Making suggestions to crew members and hoping they picked up on them.

k. Major Successes

The crew leaders cited many successes in their programs. Surprisingly, only one person mentioned employment and the only success mentioned by more than one person was the completion of specific projects (mentioned by two leaders):

- Completion of specific projects
- Finding employment for crew members
- Development of relationships between people
- Teaching the crew to think and to exchange ideas between young and old

- Increasing self confidence and related attitudes and values.

The crew leaders attributed these successes to:

- A supervision style that emphasized empowerment and autonomy (that they used with crews and administrators used with them)
- Crew members' interest, diligence, and learning
- Individual attention given to crew members.

A crew leader said of the success of his crew:

> *"[The program succeeded] because it gave the crew projects and let them control the destiny of the project, let them decide what needed to be done, how it was to be done, and what they needed to do it. They then started the project and stayed on it until it is completed. The corps members saw the value of the planning stage, the sweat of a good day's work, and the rewards of a complete project."*

1. Quality of Support Received from Project Administrator(s)

Administrators provided crew leaders with an outstanding level of support. On a scale of 1 (outstanding) to 7 (poor) three crew leaders rated the support as 1 and two rated it as 2.

By way of explanation crew leaders said of their administrators:

- Help and support was "always there."

- They knew the projects.
- They gave the crew leaders autonomy.

m. Recommendations to Improve the Projects

The crew leaders had a variety of recommendations, although the only recommendation offered by more than one crew leader was to extend the length of the training period. Their recommendations included:

- Increase the length of time people are in the program
- Build in promotions for crew members
- Raise the pay level
- Recruit older participants
- Screen applicants more effectively
- Increase the involvement of private enterprise and industry
- Change the fiscal program year to accommodate outdoor projects.

3. Crew Member Responses

a. Crew Members' Most Important Responsibilities

Most crew members viewed their responsibilities as those related to work, to following related rules, and to "getting things done." They regarded learning as less important. Among the responsibilities that crew members listed (some crew members listed two) were the following:

- To do one's best, to do the job right, to do what one is supposed to do (16 responses)
- To work safely, on time, and according to rules (12)
- To accomplish a specific task (8)
- To learn (7)
- To relate to and/or help others (6).

b. Reasons for Enrolling in the Conservation Corps

Crew members enrolled in the program both to obtain training and to earn money. The three reasons cited most frequently by crew members for enrolling (some cited more than one reason):

- To get training (15 responses)

- To earn money/get a job (10)
- To improve oneself (5).

c. Conservation Corps Compared to Other Schooling

Crew members rated the Conservation Corps training more highly than they rated other schooling. On a scale of 1 (Much more satisfying) to 7 (Much less satisfying), the crew members all rated the corps as at least somewhat satisfying than other schooling they had had. Most rated it much more satisfying: Seven rated it 1, seven as 2, seven as 3, and six as 4.

Asked to explain their comparisons of the corps training to previous schooling, crew members said:

- They learned more in the corps training than in previous schooling (13 responses)
- The corps provided hands on work experience (5)
- The corps experience was satisfying and fun. (4)

In addition, the corps training allowed the crew members' voices to count, got more done than other education, gave them the chance to meet people, and led to personal growth.

d. Crew Members' Change in View of Older Persons

The majority of crew members said that their view of older persons had not changed while they worked on the project. They indicated that they had always respected older persons, got along well with them, and saw no real difference between younger and older persons.

The crew members offered these changes in their view:

- No change in view (15 responses)
- Myths and stereotypes dispelled (4)
- Older adults can be source of learning (3)
- Empathy or respect increased (2).

e. Quality of Communication with Crew Leader

The crew members rated the communication between the crew leader and the crew very highly. On a scale of 1 (Excellent) to 7 (poor), 17 rate communications as 1, four as 2, one as 3, and five as 4. They explained the nature of the communication with the crew leader in a variety of ways:

- Understanding, friendly, and tolerant (5)
- Teaches and explains (5)
- Patient, good listener and communicator (4)

- Set limits, is the boss (4)
- Sees the work gets done, committed to excellence (2)
- Communicates reasonably well (3)
- Communicates poorly (3)
- Represents a father figure (1).

One crew member said:

> *"He respects us and he doesn't laugh or get angry when we do something wrong."*

Another crew member said:

> *"Even though he's our boss, and acts accordingly, we can talk to him like a friend."*

A third crew member said:

> *"The communication between myself and the crew leader are pretty fair. I realize he is the boss, and I respect this. I do what I'm told."*

f. Overall Rating of the Program.

The crew members believed that the Conservation Corps intergenerational projects were very successful. On a scale of 1 (Highly successful) to 7 (Not successful), 9 crew members rated the program as 1, seven as 2, five as 3, five as 4, and one as 5. The crew members explained that the program:

- Helped others and helped the community (5 responses)

- Had a positive intergenerational aspect (5)
- Prepared crew members for the future, for jobs (4)
- Motivated crew members (3)
- Was of high quality and was enjoyable (2)
- Provided only low pay and didn't produce jobs. (2)

One crew member said:

> *"I see it like this, older people have a lot to teach us younger people who are willing to learn and through this program it happened."*

Another crew member said:

> *"The corps is helping me reach goals which were out of my grasp."*

g. Most Rewarding/Least Rewarding Aspects of the Conservation Corps

The corps members found that learning and accomplishing things that added to their pride and self confidence were the most rewarding aspects of the corps. No one mentioned getting a job.

- Learning new skills or trades (9)
- Increasing pride or self confidence (6)
- Earning regular pay (4)

- Working with diverse, nice people (6)

- Finishing a task or making something. (2)

Crew members said they liked working outside, felt they helped others, and valued a promotion within the program.

Fewer than half the participants replied to the questions about "least rewarding aspects of the conservation corps." The corps members said that the least rewarding aspects included the following:

- Problems with fellow corps members (arguments, laziness)

- Harsh weather (too hot, too cold to go out)

- Low pay

- Administrative details (time sheets, starting time)

- Lack things to do.

h. Activities that Contributed Most to Crew Members' Learning

Crew members learned by doing. They described this learning as happening as part of a specific project such as building tables or indicated a more general category like "on the job training." Crew members listed the following as contributing to their learning:

- Hands on experience or a specific project (21 responses)

- From other people (9)
- Classroom (4)
- The rope course (4) [unique to one project]
- Participating in a wide variety of activities. (3)

i. Major Problems Reported by Crew Members

More than half the crew members reported no major problems. Those who report problems said they included the following:

- People and communications problems (primarily with other crew members) (6)
- Lack of pay or late pay raises (3)
- Not knowing how to do something (3)
- Lack of projects for crews to work on. (2)

Others reported not having a job, having to drive too far, having too small a crew, and the lack of proper tools.

j. Recommendations to Improve the Intergenerational Projects

Nearly all of the recommendations focused on work related aspects of the projects: pay, tools, job placement, crew size, and so forth. In making their recommendation, the crew members

assumed that the project was a jobs program. The specific recommendations included:

- Increase the pay scale, offer overtime (11 responses)
- Supply more tools (3)
- Hire more workers for the short-handed crews (3)
- Offer job placements at the end of the program (2)
- Expand the program to more than one year. (2)

Other recommendations included making sure trainees learned more, having more projects for the teams to work on, and having a better organized project.

V. HIGHLIGHTS

- The September training workshop's group dynamics approach was very successful.

- Participants at all levels (administrators, crew leaders, and crew members) rated the program very highly and viewed other participants, at all levels, very positively.

- Relationships across the generations were positive.

- Crew members found that the intergenerational project training was more satisfying than previous training or schooling.

- The site visits demonstrated the experience, expertise, and energy that local project administrators, trainers, and crew leaders bring to the development and maintenance of an intergenerational project. The project in Ebensburg, for example, included both younger and older persons among its corps members. The Pittsburgh project added a new intergenerational dimension through construction projects done at senior high rises.

VI. PROBLEMS

- Some sites had ceased operations, did not return completed questionnaires despite repeated requests, or did not have a staff person available when GT staff arrived for a site visit.

- A number of projects cited reimbursement problems and confusion about interpretation of fiscal policies.

- The projects (and hence the overall program) did not have a unified set of goals. Rather, a number of goals were emphasized by different sites and different participants: job training, teaching skills, completing community projects, and developing attitudes and values.

- The amount and quality of GED and other career-related training varied widely. Some participants received a range of courses and job placement preparation. Others were getting little beyond what they learned on the job.

- The quality and content of information available to potential corps members about projects was not consistent between sites. Some future crew members were referred knowing very little about the Conservation Corps; others had an opportunity to observe for some days before making a final decision.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The projects and the participants should have a higher intergenerational awareness. Many of the crew members, for example, had given little thought to how olders and youngers differ. More specific intergenerational training would help to correct this lack of understanding. The many positive interactions between young and old evidenced in the project need to be highlighted and discussed as part of each project's training.

- Crew leaders and crew members frequently said how the crew members learned through direct, hands-on activities. From the site visits and questionnaires we noted that there is also emphasis put on classroom related learning (getting GED, learning material related to construction). The materials and personnel available for this instruction appear to vary widely. Training and materials that could assist sites in teaching "classroom" material to corps members geared to hands on learning styles could be shared among sites or provided by the Conservation Corps.

- The amount and quality of training should be monitored more closely so that no matter which intergenerational project a Pennsylvanian enrolls in, they would receive a minimum level of GED, technical, and jobs skills preparation.

- The intergenerational projects should have a more consistent vision of their primary goal. In particular, crew members should understand clearly that the corps is more than a temporary job. All crew members should have a clear, deep vision that they are engaged in learning for the future.

APPENDICES

A. Crew Leader Training Workshop Questionnaire

B. Administrator Questionnaire

C. Crew Leader Questionnaire

D. Crew Member Questionnaire

Intergenerational Conservation Corp

Crew Leader Training September 20 - 21, 1994

EVALUATION

We would like to know what you think of the training workshop. The information will help us improve future training.

Please answer all questions. Feel free to add comments to any question. Write on the back of page 2, if necessary.

1. How would you rate this two-day training workshop overall?

Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. What did you like most about the workshop? **Please explain**.

3. What did you like least about the workshop? **Please explain**.

4. In terms of how much of the workshop information you can use in your work, how would you rate the workshop?

Very useful		Moderately useful			Not at all useful	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

chris\evaluat\con-corp\training.eva 04/06/95

5. What aspects of the workshop were most useful to you? **Why?**

6. What aspect of the workshop were least useful to you? **Why?**

7. How well did the workshop make use of your time?

Very good use		Moderately good use			Not good use	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8. What activities or events made the best use of your time?

9. What activities or events did <u>not</u> make good use of your time?

10. What were the three most important things you learned from the workshop?

1.

2.

3.

11. How would you rate the following activities

	Very useful					Somewhat useful	Not useful
Group dynamics training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
"Share and Process"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Roleplay	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cooperation squares	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Survival Run	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Lost at Sea	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

13. What suggestions do you have for future training?

Name _____ (Optional)

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University of Pittsburgh

University Center for Social and Urban Research
Generations Together: An Intergenerational Studies Program

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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260-5907
412-648-7150
Fax: 412-624-4810

October, 1994

Dear Intergenerational Conservation Corp Administrator:

We would like to know your thoughts and ideas about the Intergenerational Conservation Corp.

Can you take a few minutes to complete the attached questionnaire? Please answer all the questions. You may write additional comments on the back of the last page.

We will summarize the answers from all the participants. You will not be identified with any answers. We will send the summary to the Pennsylvania Conservation Corp to help them improve future programs.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Chris Ward

Chris Ward
Generations Together

Intergenerational Conservation Corp
Administrator Questionnaire
October, 1994

Site: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Please answer all questions. You may write additional comments on the back of the last page. Thank you.

1. What are your two most important responsibilities in relation to your intergenerational conservation corp program?

   1. _____

   2. _____

2. a) What are your three most important goals for your intergenerational conservation crop program?

   1. _____

   2. _____

   3. _____

   b) To what degree have these goals been met? (Circle one)

Completely			Somewhat			Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

   c) Please explain:

3. a) What are the two major problems your intergenerational conservation corp program has encountered?

1. _____

2. _____

b) How have you solved for these problems?

4. a) Compared to the performance of other crew leaders, how would you rate the performance of your intergenerational crew leader? (Circle one)

Outstanding			Average			Poor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b) Please explain:

5. a) Compared to the performance of other crews, how would you rate the performance of your intergenerational crew? (Circle one)

Outstanding			Average			Poor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b) Please explain:

6. a) How well has the intergenerational conservation corp program developed better relationships between younger and older persons? (Circle one)

Very well			Moderately Well			Not Well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b) Please explain:

7. a) How would you rate your intergenerational conservation corp program overall? (Circle one)

Highly successful			Moderately successful			Not successful
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b) Please explain:

8. a) How would you rate the quality of support you received from the Pennsylvania Conservation Corp? (Circle one)

Outstanding			Average			Poor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b) Please explain:

9. To what degree is the goal of your program

	A major goal						Not a goal
a) To teach specific work skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b) To teach values and attitudes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c) To help people get jobs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d) To complete specific projects	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. What recommendations do you have to improve your program?

Thank you!

Chris Ward
Generations Together
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Fax: 412-624-4810

October, 1994

Dear Intergenerational Conservation Corp Crew Leader:

We would like to know your thoughts and ideas about the Intergenerational Conservation Corp.

Can you take a few minutes to complete the attached questionnaire? Please answer all the questions. You may write additional comments on the back of the last page.

We will summarize the answers from all the participants. You will not be identified with any answers. We will send the summary to the Pennsylvania Conservation Corp to help them improve future programs.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Chris Ward

Chris Ward
Generations Together

Intergenerational Conservation Corp
Crew Leader Questionnaire
October, 1994

Site: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Please answer all questions. You may write additional comments on the back of the last page. Thank you.

1. What are your two most important responsibilities as crew leader in the intergenerational conservation corp program?

   1. _____

   2. _____

2. a) Compared to other jobs you have held, the crew leader position has been? (Circle one)

Much more satisfying			Moderately satisfying		Much less satisfying	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

   b) Please explain:

3. a) To what degree has your attitude toward young people changed since you began working with your crew? (Circle one)

A great deal			Somewhat		Not at all	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

   b) Please explain:

4. a) To what degree have younger crew members' attitudes toward you changed since you began working with them? (Circle one)

A great deal			Somewhat			Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b) Please explain.

5. a) How would you rate the communication between you and your crew? (Circle one)

Excellent			Adequate			Poor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b) Please explain:

6. a) How would you rate your intergenerational conservation corp program overall? (Circle one)

Highly successful			Moderately successful			Not successful
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b) Please explain:

7. What has been most rewarding about your work with the intergenerational conservation corp program?

Least rewarding?

8. What kinds of activities have contributed most to your crew members' learning?

1. _____

2. _____

9. What are the two major problems you encountered during the intergenerational conservation crop project?

1. _____

2. _____

How have you solved these problems?

10. What do you see as your two major successes with the program?

1. _____

2. _____

To what do you attribute these successes?

11. a) How would you rate the quality of support you received from your project administrator(s)? (Circle one)

Outstanding			Average			Poor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b) Please explain:

12. To what degree is the goal of this program:

	To a great degree						Not at all
a) To teach specific work skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b) To teach values and attitudes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c) To help people get jobs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d) To complete specific projects	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

13. What recommendation do you have to improve your program?

Thank you!

Chris Ward
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October, 1994

Dear Intergenerational Conservation Corp Crew Member:

We would like to know your thoughts and ideas about the Intergenerational Conservation Corp.

Can you take a few minutes to complete the attached questionnaire? Please answer all the questions. You may write additional comments on the back of the last page.

We will summarize the answers from all the participants. You will not be identified with any answers. We will send the summary to the Pennsylvania Conservation Corp to help them improve future programs.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Chris Ward

Chris Ward
Generations Together

Intergenerational Conservation Corp
Crew Member Questionnaire
October, 1994

Site:_____ Date:_____

Directions: Please answer all questions. You may write additional comments on the back of the last page. Thank you.

1. What are your two most important responsibilities as a crew member?

   1. _____

   2. _____

2. Why did you enroll in the intergenerational conservation corp?

3. a) Compared to other schooling you have had, the conservation corp has been: (Circle one)

Much more satisfying			Somewhat satisfying		Much less satisfying	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

   b) Please explain:

4. a) To what degree has your view of older people changed since you began working with the program? (Circle one)

A great deal			Somewhat		Not at all	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b) Please explain:

5. a) How would you rate the communication between your crew leader? (Circle one)

Excellent			Adequate		Poor	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b) Please explain:

6. a) How would you rate your intergenerational conservation corp program overall? (Circle one)

Highly successful			Moderately successful		Not successful	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

b) Please explain:

7. What has been most rewarding about participating in the conservation corp?

Least rewarding?

8. What activities have contributed most to your learning in the corp?

1. _____

2. _____

9. What problems have you encountered in your program?

1. _____

2. _____

How did you solve those problems?

10. What recommendations do you have to improve your program?

Thank you!

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